

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/782,074

Examiner

Kuen S. Lu

Applicant(s)

MCCORMACK ET AL.

Art Unit

2167

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Amendment filed 11/20/2006.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-16 and 18-33 (renumbered to 1-32).
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 11/10/06 & 8/21/06
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date 1/23/2007.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☐ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This is responsive to Applicant's Amendment filed November 20, 2006. After a thorough search and examination of the present application, and in light of a telephone interview conducted January 23, 2007 in which an Examiner's Amendment was authorized to amend claims 1, 17-23, 29 and 32 for further narrowing scope of claimed subject matter, Claims 1-16 and 18-33 (renumbered to 1-32) are allowed.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The information disclosure statements (IDS) filed August 21, 2006 and November 10, 2006 is considered complying with 37 CFR 1.98. 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2) and corresponding PTO-1449s is electronically signed as attached.

Examiner's Amendments

3. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this Examiner's amendment, listed below, was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Murrell W. Blackburn (Registration Number 50,881) on January 23, 2007. The interview summary is attached.

3.1. Please amend claims 1, 17-18, 20-23, 29 and 32 as follow:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of bi-directional communication between a

Art Unit: 2167

spreadsheet application and a database, comprising:

connecting a spreadsheet to a data source;

importing via the spreadsheet application data to the spreadsheet from the data source:

modifying the imported data in the spreadsheet

publishing data from the spreadsheet to the data source via the spreadsheet application;

determining whether publishing the data to the data source creates a conflict with data previously published to the data source via the spreadsheet application; and

storing the data at the data source including writing via the spreadsheet application any changes made to the data in the spreadsheet over corresponding data previously stored at the data source;

whereby publishing the data to the data source includes publishing imported data back to the data source and writing the modified imported data over the data in the data source from which the data was imported to the spreadsheet.

17. (Currently Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 17, whereby determining whether publishing the data to the data source creates a conflict with data previously published to the data source includes comparing the data with data previously published to the data source.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 17, whereby if publishing the data to the data source creates a conflict with data previously published to the data source, passing an identification of any of the data that creates a conflict with data previously published to the data source to the spreadsheet for alerting a user of the spreadsheet as to the data conflict.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 17, whereby if publishing the data to the data source creates a conflict with data previously published to the data source, resolving the conflict by accepting a latest data published to the data source.

22. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 17, whereby if publishing the data to the data source creates a conflict with data previously published to the data source, resolving the conflict by discarding any of the data that conflicts with corresponding data of the data previously published to the data source.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 17, whereby if publishing the data to the data source creates a conflict with data previously published to the data source, resolving the conflict by merging the data with the data previously published to the data source such that for any portion of the data that conflicts with a corresponding portion of the data previously published to the data source, writing over the corresponding portion of the data previously published to the data source with any portion of the data that

conflicts with the corresponding portion of the data.

29. (Currently amended) A computer storage medium readable by a computing system and encoding a computer program of instructions for executing a computer process for bi-directional communication between a spreadsheet application and a database, said computer process comprising:

connecting a spreadsheet to a data source;

importing data to the spreadsheet from the data source via the spreadsheet application;

modifying the imported data in the spreadsheet via the spreadsheet application;

and

publishing the modified imported data back to the data source and writing the modified imported data over the data in the data source from which the data was imported to the spreadsheet;

determining whether publishing the data to the data source creates a conflict with data previously published to the data source via the spreadsheet application; and

storing the data at the data source including writing via the spreadsheet application any changes made to the data in the spreadsheet over corresponding data previously stored at the data source.

32. (Currently amended) A method of bi-directional communication between a spreadsheet application and a database, comprising:

connecting a spreadsheet to a data source via a bi-directional communication protocol allowing data to flow between the spreadsheet and the data source;

importing via the spreadsheet application, data to the spreadsheet from the data source;

modifying the imported data in the spreadsheet via the spreadsheet application;

exporting via the spreadsheet application the modified imported data back to the data source and writing the modified imported data over the data in the data source from which the data was imported to the spreadsheet; and

determining whether writing the modified imported data to the data source creates a conflict with data previously written to the data source by comparing the modified imported data with data previously written to the data source; and

storing the data at the data source including writing via the spreadsheet application any changes made to the data in the spreadsheet over corresponding data previously stored at the data source.

Reason for Allowable

4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

In the Examiner's Office Action for non-Final Rejection of August 18, 2006, 35 U.S.C. 35 U.S.C. § 103, rejections to claims 1, 29 and 32 was primarily based on Maleport et al.: "MESSAGE ANALYSIS TOOL", U.S. Patent Application 2004/0039743, published February 26, 2004, hereafter "Maleport"; in view of Louis Davidson: "Professional SQL Server 2000 Database Design", Wrox Press Ltd.®, 2001.

In the Remarks filed on November 20, 2006, concerning claims 1, 29 and 32, Applicant argued that both Maleport and Davison fail to teach application's major features of bi-directional communication between a spreadsheet application and a database featuring by the following:

(1) importing via the spreadsheet application data to the spreadsheet from the data source, (2) modifying the imported data in the spreadsheet, (3) publishing data from the spreadsheet to the data source via the spreadsheet application, and (4) storing the data at the data source including writing via the spreadsheet application any changes made to the data in the spreadsheet over corresponding data previously stored at the data source.

After further consideration of Applicant's amendments made to claims 1, 29 and 32, and Examiner's amendment further made to claims 1, 17-23, 29 and 32, Examiner is persuaded that Applicant's Remarks as filed are valid with respect to the mostly recently amended claims, which include the combined subject matter of:

bi-directional communication between a spreadsheet application and a data source comprising:

data imported from the data source to a spreadsheet is modified and then published to the data source via the spreadsheet application;

whether publishing the data to the data source creates a conflict with data previously published to the data source via the spreadsheet application is determined; and

the storing of data at the data source includes writing via the spreadsheet application

any changes made to the data in the spreadsheet over corresponding data previously stored at the data source.

An updated search for the prior arts on EAST database and on domains (NPL-ACM, Google.com, NPL-IEEE) has been conducted. The prior arts searched and investigated in the database and domains does not fairly teach or suggest the teaching of the newly amended claimed subject matter as described above and reflected by the combined elements in the independent claims 1, 29 and 32.

The dependent claims in the groups (2-16, 18-28), (30-31) and (33), depending directly or indirectly upon claims 1, 29 and 32, respectively, are also distinct from the prior art for the same reason.

5. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Contact Information

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kuen S. Lu whose telephone number is (571) 272-4114. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (8:00 am-5:00 pm). If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone pre unsuccessful, the examiner's

Art Unit: 2167

Supervisor, John Cottingham can be reached on (571) 272-7079. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-305-39000.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for Page 13 published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 703-305-3900 (toll-free).

Kuen S. Lu



Patent Examiner

January 24, 2007



CHRISTIAN CHACE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100